

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Please cancel claims 10-12 and 14 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein and amend claims 1, 6-9, 13 and 15 as follows.

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard, comprising:

a first band mounted on a first side of the base plate;

a second band mounted on a second side of the base plate opposite the first side of the base plate in a width direction, the second band being removably attached to the first band, so as to fasten a toe end portion of the boot to the base plate, the second band fastening the toe end portion at an acute angle with respect to the base plate and the toe end portion of the boot;

a pad ~~comprising attached to one of the first band and the second band at an upper surface of the pad, the pad comprises a first~~ lower part with a ~~lower~~ an inner surface contacting a ~~front~~ forwardmost surface of the toe end portion of the boot, and a ~~second~~ an upper part with a ~~lower~~ an inner surface contacting an upper surface of the toe end portion of the boot ~~[[,]]~~ and a convex intermediate part connecting ~~member extending between the upper first and lower second~~ parts ~~having a shape matching that of the toe end portion of the boot, the lower part of the pad~~ being attached to an inner surface of one of the first band and the second band.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously presented) The apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard as set forth in claim 1, wherein the pad includes a soft material.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously presented) The apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard as set forth in claim 1 wherein the pad includes a hard material.

6. (Currently amended) An apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard, comprising:

a first band mounted on a first side of the base plate;

a second band mounted on a second side of the base plate opposite the first side of the base plate in a width direction; ~~and~~

a third band mounted on the first band at a first portion and removably attached to the second band at a second portion ~~[[,]] ; and~~

a pad fixed on the third band, the pad including a front portion connecting to a forwardmost portion of a toe end portion of the boot and a top portion connecting to an upper portion of the toe end portion of the boot, the front portion of the pad being arranged at a distance from the base plate and including a vertically extending flat surface, and the top portion including a flat surface extending at an angle from the vertically extending flat surface ~~first and second belts, the first and second belts respectively having a first end secured to the first portion of the first band and a second end secured to the second portion of the second band, first and~~

~~second belts being separated in middle portions thereof, the third band fastening to a toe end portion of the boot at an acute angle with respect to the base plate and the toe end portion.~~

7. (Currently amended) An apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard, comprising:

a fixing structure connecting a first side of the base plate to a second side of the base plate at an acute angle with respect to a toe end of the boot, the fixing structure including a ~~first~~ belt holding a pad where a lower end of the pad holds a ~~front~~ forwardmost portion of the toe end of the boot and a top end of the pad holds ~~second belt holding~~ a top portion of the toe end of the boot, the pad including a convex-shaped portion connecting the upper and lower ends of the pad ~~the first and second belts having common first and second ends and being separated in middle portions thereof;~~ and

a first band ~~that~~ removably connecting the fixing structure to the first side of the base plate.

8. (Currently amended) The apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard as set forth in claim 7, the fixing structure further comprising:

a second band connecting removably to the belt ~~first ends of the first belt and the second belt,~~ and connecting fixedly to the second side of the base plate,

wherein the pad is ~~second ends of the first belt and the second belt are~~ removably connected to the first band.

9. (Currently amended) The apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard as set forth in claim 8, wherein the pad and the first belt ~~and the second belt~~ are formed integrally ~~with respect to each other.~~

10-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently amended) The apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard as set forth in claim 7, ~~further comprising: wherein a pad for covering the toe end of the boot~~ ~~disposed between the first belt and the second belt,~~ the pad ~~having~~ has a shape matching that of the toe end portion of the boot.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) The apparatus for binding a boot to a base plate of a snowboard as set forth in claim 7, wherein the first band is adjustable with respect to the pad ~~first ends of the~~ ~~first belt and the second belt.~~